



To: Conservation Commission
From: Commission Staff
Date: November 7, 2005
Re: FY06 Capacity Building Grant Application & Award Process

PURPOSE:

Presentation, discussion and consideration of Staff recommendation for the 2006 Capacity Building Grant Application and Award Process.

BACKGROUND:

- ◆ Budget Notes: "Sustaining District Ops – Chapter 31, Laws of 2005 (SHB 1462) allows the State Conservation Commission to adopt rules concerning eligibility and distribution of grants to conservation districts. One-time funding will provide supplementary basic finding to the state's lowest-income conservation districts. \$100,000 available for each fiscal year."
- ◆ Draft process developed by the District Operations Committee.
- ◆ Draft process presented as informational item at September Commission Meeting.
- ◆ Draft process presented to WACD O & D, CDs and Commission Staff for review and comments.
- ◆ Comments incorporated, and District Operations Committee final recommendation made to Commission Staff.

OUTLINE OF PROPOSED PROCESS

- ◆ Awards will be made through an application and ranking process.
- ◆ Funding must be used by CDs to build / support critical infrastructure.
- ◆ Funding available only to CDs that demonstrate financial need and the ability to use the funding for capacity building.
- ◆ Eligible capacity building outcomes include: Annual and/or long range planning; Locally led planning participation; Supervisor/Associate Supervisor training; Supervisor/Associate Supervisor attendance at WADE and/or WACD annual meetings; District employee capacity building training; Development of a strategic plan for funding; Implementing an assessment or other long term

funding; Conducting stakeholder and partnership meetings; Communications development & enhancement; Startup funds for a new program; and Identification and application for new sources of grant funding.

- ◆ Applications will be numerically ranked based on point ranges assigned to 1) ultimate project outcomes, 2) capacity building need, 3) district financial need, and 4) outcomes compared to district needs.
- ◆ Rankings will be done by Commission Regional Managers and Grants Staff.
- ◆ Grant staff will work with CDs receiving funding to develop grant contracts.
- ◆ Funding will be distributed on a reimbursement basis.

TIMELINE:

- Nov 7** Commissioners authorize the proposed 2006 Capacity Building Grant Application & Award Process.
- Nov 8** Applications sent to CDs
- Dec 8** Application deadline
- Dec 12 – 16** Staff rankings
- Dec 19** Begin developing contracts with grantees

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- ◆ Commissioners authorize the proposed 2006 Capacity Building Grant Application & Award Process.

-----Original Message-----

From: Les & Sherry Penney [mailto:penneylands@gorge.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2005 9:11 AM
To: Witt, Cheryl; Clark, Mark (ECY WCC); Becker, Debbie (ECY)
Cc: Paul Stoker; 'John Larson'; Gus Hughbanks; George Boggs; 'Carolyn Kelly'; 'Vicki Carter'; 'Ron Shavlik'; 'Max' 'Prinsen'; 'Jim Hill'; 'George Mahoney'; 'Fred Colvin'; 'Ron Juris'; Ledgerwood, Ray; 'John Larson'; Clark, Mark (ECY WCC); Rushton, Doug; Salzer, Tom
Subject: Capacity Building Grant Package

The WACD District Operations Committee, with the tremendous help of Ray Ledgerwood's facilitation, has completed its recommended package for the Washington State Conservation Commission to use in awarding the FY 2006 \$100,000 funds for capacity building for conservation districts.

We believe that we have provided you a package that works well for this award cycle and expect the package and process for the FY2007 cycle to be improved based on feedback from you and the districts during this FY2006 cycle. Please let us know what support you will need from our committee as the capacity building process moves forward.

Sherry Penney
Vicki Carter
Co-Chairs of District Operations Committee

-----Original Message-----

From: Ray Ledgerwood [mailto:ray.ledgerwood@scc.wa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2005 8:57 PM
To: 'Vicki Carter'; 'Les & Sherry Penney'
Subject: ready to send?

Vicki and Sherry,
Here is the most up-to-date versions of the committee proposed Capacity Building Grants procedure. I thought you would want to forward to Mark Clark, Debbie Becker, and Cheryl Witt with copies to Paul Stoker, Fred Colvin, John Larson, Gus Hughbanks and George Boggs on behalf of the committee.
ray

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FY 2006-2007 CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT APPLICATION

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:

The Conservation Commission received an additional funding of \$100,000 for FY 2006 and \$100,000 for FY 2007 to be used to support the critical infrastructure of conservation districts as they assist land managers with meet locally identified goals aimed at achieving natural resource protection, enhancement, and restoration.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT ELIGIBILITY:

Capacity Building Grants will be made available to conservation districts that demonstrate financial need as well as the ability to use this funding for capacity building within their district or in combination with another district.

ULTIMATE PROJECT OUTCOMES:

What are the ultimate outcomes your proposed project will work to achieve? Please refer to the following grant eligible project tasks, select those that your district will work on, and enter a brief explanation under the category of how your project will achieve the ultimate outcomes, and how your efforts in the particular area will build capacity in your district.

Annual and/or long range planning *

Locally led planning participation (*travel expenses, meeting expenses*)

Supervisor/Associate Supervisor training (*registrations, travel expenses*)

Supervisor/Associate Supervisor attendance at WADE and/or WACD Annual meeting (*registrations, travel expenses*)

District Employee capacity building training for outreach, communications, planning, program development, administrative, management, and/or personnel needs (*registrations, travel expenses*)

Development of a strategic plan for funding *

Implementing an assessment or other long term funding *

Conducting stakeholder and partnership meetings (*to encourage participation and involvement*)

Communications development and enhancement (*outreach on district programs to stakeholders and/or partners*)

GRANT BUDGET

BY FUNDING SOURCE

1. GRANT REQUEST

Total Grant Request 1. \$

2) MATCH – There is a 10% match requirement for this grant.

Contributing Entity	Type of Match (Cash, in kind, etc.)	Amount
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
		Total Match 2. \$ _____

TOTAL PROJECT COST (1 + 2) \$

BUDGET BY CAPACITY BUILDING WORK PLAN ULTIMATE OUTCOMES

Check the outcomes for this grant application and estimate the Total Project Cost (includes Grant Request & Match Amounts) by ultimate outcome.

Outcomes:	Costs
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual and/or long range planning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Locally led planning participation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor/Associate Supervisor training	
<input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor/Associate Supervisor attendance at WADE and/or WACD Annual	
<input type="checkbox"/> Development of a strategic plan for funding	
<input type="checkbox"/> Implementing an assessment or other long term funding	
<input type="checkbox"/> Conducting stakeholder and/or partnership meetings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications development and enhancement	
<input type="checkbox"/> Start-up funds for a new program	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identification and application for new sources of grant funding	
<input type="checkbox"/> District Employee capacity building training for outreach, communications, planning, program development, administrative, management, and/or personnel needs	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: (provide description)	
TOTAL	\$

BY BUDGET OBJECT

	(A) GRANT REQUEST	(B) MATCH	(C) PROJECT TOTAL
SALARIES			
BENEFITS			
TRAVEL			
EQUIPMENT <i>(specify)</i>			
GOODS & SERVICES			
CONTRACTS <i>(specify)</i>			
OTHER <i>(specify) Cost-share</i>			
OVERHEAD COSTS Use <u>only one</u> of the three following methods:			
1) Direct Costing Method			
Salary/Benefits			
Travel			
Equipment <i>(specify)</i>			
Goods & Services			
Other <i>(specify)</i>			
2) 25% Overhead Method <i>(No more than 25% of all Salaries/ Benefits)</i>			
3) 10% Overhead Method <i>(No more than 10% of Total Grant Amount)</i>			
TOTALS			

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FY 2006-2007 CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT APPLICATION

DEFINITION

1. Capacity Building – What do we mean by “Capacity Building” (several districts)

For purposes of this grant program the definition of capacity building will be; those efforts that increase or enhance a Conservation District's ability to strengthen their infrastructure, increase operational effectiveness, and increase the district's capacity to assist local land managers as they address the natural resource issues in their district.

APPLICATION PROCESS

2. Application Timeline – When are applications due and when can a district expect the funds to be allocated? (Districts need reasonable time to prepare given other commitments on time.) (Pend Oreille, Snohomish)

The application process will begin immediately after the WSCC approves the grants procedure. A 30-day application period will be provided for districts, followed up with application ranking utilizing WSCC Region Managers and Grants Staff. WSCC will decide on the final approval of distribution, with grants staff working with districts regarding contracts.

FUNDING & RELATIONSHIP TO BASIC FUNDING GRANTS

3. Unspent Funds - What happens to capacity building grant funds that a district cannot spend on capacity building by the end of fiscal year 2006? (Central & Eastern Klickitat)

WSCC understands that time is short for spending the first year of these funds in the FY 2006 period. Unfortunately, state law does not allow us to extend spending of the first year funds beyond June 30, 2006. Funds not spent in FY 2006 are not carried over to FY 2007.

4. Basic Funding – Does this mean that Basic Funding will now require grant applications? (Clallam)

No, every district still receives the same Basic Funding amount approved by the legislature for each year. This capacity building funding is an additional amount, \$100,000 in FY 2006 and \$100,000 in FY2007, to be awarded by WSCC through a grant process to districts that have a sound capacity building plan and are considered to have the greatest financial need to provide support to their stakeholders.

5. Basic Funding – Is this \$100,000 / \$200,000 additional money? (Cowlitz, Wahkiakum)

Yes - see answer to question 4 above.

6. Funding Amounts – Is there a maximum or range of funding that a district should expect to receive if awarded a capacity building grant? (Jefferson County, Palouse, Pend Oreille)

WSCC is not assigning a maximum amount for which districts may apply. We strongly recommend that districts consider the \$3000 - \$8000 range as reasonable. Our intent is to assist as many districts as possible while still providing each recipient an amount to achieve realistic capacity building goals.

7. Funding Amounts – Are the funds going to be equally distributed to all districts (Whidbey Island)

No, only those districts that apply for a capacity building grant and successfully compete against other applicants by demonstrating financial need and the capacity building plan of action with the funding requested. Grants will be for varying amounts as described with question 6 above.

GRANT ELIGIBILITY, CRITERIA, AND PRIORITIES

8. Criteria for Financial Need for Capacity Building Funding - How will the determination be made of which districts have the greatest financial need for the capacity building grant? (Columbia, Stevens, Whidbey Island)

WSCC understands that many districts consider themselves to be in serious financial need for capacity building funding. In addition to the information each district provides on its grant application, WSCC will rely on the financial reports of the applying districts, plus the knowledge of the Region Managers and our grants staff to rank the grant applications. WSCC will evaluate the applications based on (1) best use of funds to achieve capacity building goals beneficial to stakeholders and (2) greatest financial need to achieve well-defined capacity building goals. WSCC will also consider the availability of “unencumbered” funds, including savings/investment accounts, as part of financial needs ranking. The WSCC will evaluate the ranking process in the first year to look for improvements in the second year process.

9. Assessments/ Local Funding Sources - Can a conservation district apply for a capacity building grant if local assessment is not a realistic possibility with its stakeholders or if it already receives funding from local assessments? (Adams, Pierce, Stevens)

WSCC understands that a local assessment may not be a funding system that all districts will use. Districts that are NOT planning to request local assessments are eligible to apply for the capacity building grant. Districts that DO receive local assessments are also eligible to apply. The intent of capacity building grants is to get the best use of funds to achieve outcomes that will gain most benefit for stakeholders. Decisions of which applicants are awarded capacity building grants will include an evaluation of the availability of “unencumbered” funds for each applying district to reach its goals for stakeholder support.

10. Priority of Tasks for Capacity Building– Are any of the listed outcome oriented tasks more important in the ranking criteria for awarding capacity building grants? (Columbia, Pend Oreille) Should the district assign a priority to the tasks for its planned outcome? (Jefferson County)

No, the tasks do not have any priority of importance. Each applying district may decide which tasks it wants to address with capacity building funds. If each applying district provides its priority for the use of capacity building funds, it will greatly assist WSCC in evaluating best use of the funds for capacity building outcomes that benefit stakeholders.

11. Is training of associate supervisors and staff considered part of capacity building? (Many districts)

Yes, training of associate supervisors is a major capacity building endeavor to actively involve stakeholders in conservation. With feedback from districts, certain types of training for staff will be included under the training task. Staff training is important for skills development in areas such as outreach, communications, planning, program development, administration, financial and personnel management. Technical training such as water quality analysis, soil analysis, etc. can be addressed in other grants available to districts, and therefore will not be considered eligible use of capacity building funds.

12. Can general operations, physical or organizational infrastructure, payment of WACD dues, or cost share be an eligible task for the capacity building grant? (Grays Harbor, Lewis County, Lincoln County, Pine Creek, Whitman)

WSCC recognizes these as district financial concerns. Because other funding sources such as Basic Funding, Water Quality Implementation and Livestock cost share grants address many of the items in question 12, these expenses are not considered eligible for the capacity building grant program. Capacity building grants will be to address needs not clearly addressed by any other source of funds available to districts. Districts can re-evaluate their use of basic funds for tasks such as annual / long range planning or supervisor / staff non-technical training, and apply for capacity building funds for those tasks, thus making more of basic funds available for general operations, improving infrastructure, and dues payments.

13. Can a district suggest an “other” task that it considers important for capacity building? (Pine Creek)

Yes, districts may have some excellent capacity building tasks that we did not consider. Please notice the answer to question 12 when considering other capacity building tasks.

14. Could youth and adult education be considered eligible under the communications development and enhancement task or conducting stakeholder meetings, or as an “other” task? (Whitman)

No for performing education programs, and yes to improving an education program through training. Although many districts consider education to be under funded, districts can address education under the Water Quality Implementation grant and Department of Ecology grants. The capacity building funding is to address needs not covered under other grants available to districts.

INSTRUCTIONS ON COMPLETING GRANT APPLICATION

15. Does the applicant have to address every task? How much space can be used to address each task? (Okanogan)

No, the applicant does not have to address every task. This grant is to help each district achieve what IT needs for capacity building. We strongly encourage applying districts to have a capacity building plan in mind as they apply. You may attach such a plan to your application or provide addendum paragraphs (one paragraph per task) to succinctly explain what you plan to accomplish under the identified tasks should your district be awarded a capacity building grant.

16. What kind of use of consultants is considered acceptable for capacity building? (South Douglas)

Use of a consultant to help set up a process or train staff and / or supervisors for capacity building tasks is acceptable for a grant application. Repeated or ongoing work for a consultant is not considered a good use of capacity building funds. The intent is for the district staff and supervisors to gain the ability to do capacity building.

17. Please describe qualifying activities for applicants to consider under the following tasks: (Pine Creek)

Some examples are:

- ◆ Local Planning (Watershed, habitat planning efforts);
- ◆ Supervisor or Staff Training (see limitations in question 11 above);
- ◆ Meeting Attendance – yes to WACD Area Meetings, RC & D, NRCS LWG, etc;
- ◆ Strategic Planning – yes, may include planning for other things than funding;
- ◆ Communication Development & Enhancement – Can it include other participants than stakeholders / partners? (Stakeholders and partners are a pretty inclusive set of participants.)